taken from Scipio's tomb—a chaste and exquisite adaptation of the Doric order—adorns the gallery of the Vatican.

But these monuments, beautiful though they be, and expressive of their purpose, and from which many a lesson of simplicity and solemnity of character may be gathered, still speak of the superstition under which the age laboured—their emblems are mournful, they speak of death as a deprivation of the joys of life, and a bereavement to their friends; they tell of the history of the past, but of no hope in the future; all beyond the grave was shrouded from their view by the mists of uncertainty and superstition. The reversed torch, skulls, and implements of the charnel-house, and idle fables of mythology, but ill befit the sacred character of the tomb. But when Christianity dawned on the world, and at first the new faith was professed amid persecution and derision, they yet hopefully laid the martyr to his rest in the simple catacomb, and carved above the cheerful emblems of their religion, and death was to them a welcome guest. Hence sprung another class of monumental architecture, which, if it lacked the material beauty of refined Greece, or the magnificence of Rome, spoke more to the heart and less to the sense; and when at length Christianity triumphed over Paganism, and the cloads of superstition were dispelled, the church gathered its members around and within it, the dead as well as the living, and there lay the crowned monarch, the mitred bishop, and mailed warrior, their hands lifted in prayer, reposing calmly as if but in sleep. The cross, the emblem of their faith, the palm branch and olive, the signs of victory, carved upon the tomb, all pointing to the more hopeful character of their religion. This spirit of Christianity among the chivalrous Teutonic nations of northern Europe, and in the hands of the masonic fraternity of artists, was embodied in their conception of ecclesiastical architecture, which, as the visible church on earth, in its perfect unity of design, soared to heaven in imitation of its prototype. The monumental architecture likewise partook of the same impulse, and they both advanced together to their full development, mutually enhanced by the connection; for the simple headstone and slab of bold design, in the same style as the details of the cathedral, extended its architectural character beyond the immediate walls; and within, the panelled altar tombs, with their rich canopies, added to the effect of the interior, increasing the playful distribution of light and shade, breaking the flatness of the walls, and by the colour and gilding with which they were often decorated, sparkling like gems amidst the grey columned aisles, whose clustered shafts needed but the reflected tints that streamed from the painted windows upon them, and thus was the richness harmoniously distributed throughout the whole.

In England but few of the mediæval monuments of a date anterior to the twelfth century remain, and those are of a simple character, often as it were but the covers to the stone coffins, narrowing gradually from the head to the feet, and sometimes ridge-shaped, with crosses carved upon them. Their proportions are generally good, and the mouldings rich and bold. In the early part of the twelfth century effigies of ecclesiastics, and, in the latter part, of knights in armour, appear, as yet, on very low tombs; still in general the covers of the coffins sunk beneath the pavement. In the thirteenth century they were often placed under arched recesses in the wall, which at first were plain and obtusely pointed, and later equilateral and richly foliated, surmounted by finials, with pinnacled buttresses carried up at the angles: they harmonise well with the architecture of the church, even more so, perhaps, than those which were afterwards placed between the piers of the nave. The monument of Sir James Douglas, in Douglas Church, is a fine and characteristic example.

In the fourteenth century, the altar or table tombs, with their cumbent effigies, placed in an isolated position in the church, became the type of the monuments in all those countries where the Gothic architecture flourished. Their simple appropriate character, chaste and elegant design, with the abundant variety and tasteful application of the ornament with which they were decorated, devoid of the exuberance and profusion of minute detail, which prevailed at a later period, with the sculptured figures upon them, reposing as it were from the turmoil of their earthly life, with a calm and cheerful countenance, the hands raised in a suppliant attitude, and sometimes the husband and wife lying side by side, not to be separated even by death; clad in the ecclesiastical robes, or the armour and costume of the period, with angels often supporting the head, and the feet resting on the heraldic animal of their armorial bearings,—all mark them as the most beautiful and perfect of sepulchral monuments, whether viewed in themselves or in their relation to the edifice they adorn. Their material is often of the richest quality, and the brilliant colouring of the enameling on the trappings and shields and inlaid bronze bands of black letter inscriptions within the mouldings, contrast finely with the grey tone of the marble monument, and shew the judicious application of these effective enrichments.

The tombs of Sir Oliver Ingam and Sir Roger and Margaret de Boys, in Ingam Church, Norfolk, of King John in Worcester Cathedral, and of John, Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and his duchess, in Wimborne Minster, which is of marble, and the effigies of alabaster, relieved with gold, are good and bold examples; as also that of the Black Prince in Canterbury Cathedral, whose effigy is of copper gilt, burnished, and enamelled with the utmost delicacy, on a rich tomb of grey marble, with a broad brass inscription plate let into the surbase mouldings: and in each panel round the sides of the tomb is a shield of enamelled brass, bearing the royal arms of France and England.

The canopies, which were often erected over these tombs, form a most picturesque and beautiful accessory, affording an opportunity for the display of that delicate lacework of tracery in which the Gothic architects took such delight; they were of various forms, some horizontal and attached to the pillars of the church; pyramidal or ogee shaped, such as the exquisite Percy shrine at Beverley: and in others rising in clustering pinnacles, with all the lightness of metal work, as from the graceful elliptic arch of Archbishop Bowet's shrine, York, and the monument of Sir Hugh de Spencer, Tewkesbury Church.

These canopies, at a later period, were extended, as it were, into Chantry chapels, surrounding the tombs with a protecting veil of gossamer tracery, numberless pendants hanging from the groined ceiling in intricate confusion. The Cathedral of Winchester is remarkably rich in these beautiful works, particularly those of the Bishops Fox, Wykeham, Waynefleet, and Beaufort. That to Isabel, Countess of Warwick, Tewkesbury Church, is a fine instance: they were formerly much more numerous than at present, having been destroyed by the iconoclasts, and the only trace remaining being the small piscina in the wall. To royal or noble families Mortuary Chapels were often erected, in connection with the church, to contain their monuments, which cluster round the choir, like the rich jewels in a casket, elaborate in ornament to a degree unsuited to the more important structure. In the centre stands the tomb, enhanced by the richness of its enclosure, the banners of the family suspended above, and their armorial bearings forming a repeated theme for the sculptor's chisel and for the painted glass, which, throwing its mellowed light over the whole, completes the richness of effect. Of these, Henry the VII.'s Chapel, with its delicate panelling and fan-groined ceiling, is a magnificent specimen, as also Wolsey's tomb-house, St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and the Beauchamp Chapel, Warwick.

Sculpture, however, being an art which depends on the individual feeling of the artist for its expression, and not to be confined by the rules to which architecture was with advantage subjected by the freemasons, without detriment, although the general sentiments of the Gothic type are conveyed by these effigies, a certain stiffness of manner generally prevails in their attitudes and a want of individuality of character. In some instances, however, much grace and dignity, with a freedom in the disposition of the draperies, are to be found in English works of Gothic art, and a beneficial influence is attributable to the sculptors from Italy, who visited England at various times. The statue of Eleanor, Queen of Edward the First, in Westminster Abbey, is a work of great beauty, and even ideality of conception and delicacy of execution. Her expression is youthful and sweet, the hair flows down to her shoulders, the hands are disposed with ease, and the drapery falls in long and graceful folds, covering the feet.

The monument of Aymer de Valence unites the excellencies of sculpture with those of architecture. The effigy, with the beautiful kneeling angels at its head, the figures in the niches surrounding the tomb, together with the foliage of the canopy, are exquisite. The tombs of Henry the Seventh, and the brass effigy of the Countess of Richmond, his mother, by Torregiano, an Italian, are very fine. And the monument of Sir Francis de Vere, over whom four knights support his armour, on a tablet, is grand in conception and picturesque in effect.

In the vaults of S. Denis, near Paris, which contain the monuments of a long line of the monarchs of France, there are some beautiful examples of recumbent statues, which possess peculiar sweetness and grace."

SHORT LEASES A SOCIAL EVIL.

THE importance of this subject, recently treated of in THE BUILDER,—"The Enfranchisement of Leasehold Tenures" over twenty years, has struck the attention of many who never before considered the evils inflicted on society at large by that pernicious custom of short leases.

Seeing that it is impossible to obtain building leases in or near the metropolis for longer periods than 50, 70, or 60 years, builders are compelled to accept them, and that, too, on the terms of the few great landlords, or to stop business and speculation: and in the valuable trading localities, or fashionable quarters, it is not unusual to make costly erections on 50, 40, and even 30 years' terms.

It is manifest that houses raised on such foundations cannot be built with the same solidity as if the duration of the lease were longer—and that rents must be higher in proportion as the annuity is curtailed.

But the evil is worse as regards tenants on half-elapsed leases, which may have, say 20 or 30 years to run. In such cases, renewal being next to impossible, unless at a premium amounting to a fee-simple purchase, the occupier, if he be a man of business, and prosperous, scruples not to disburse on his shop or country-house large sums, the produce of his thrift; or if a gentleman of fortune, and his mansion occupies an eligible position—this latter thinks nothing of laying out thousands in order to secure a fitting town mansion. But as prosperity in commerce is fluctuating, and the position of the wealthiest not free from the chances of reverse, what was expended by the father to improve his convenience, or gratify his taste, may to the son in adversity be an object of great importance.

The sums, however, thus lavished are for ever gone from the tenant, and become the property of the more deeply-calculating lessor. A preference may be given of preoccupation or lease to the outgoing tenant, on expiration of his lease—but it is only a preference at rack rent, or the amount which the premises might fetch in the market.

Few indeed are the holdings on long lease, upon which large sums have not been expended by the occupiers: and yet fewer are the houses in London which are held on freehold tenure—there is hardly such a thing to be had.

For years past the corporations of London have been adding to their estates such properties, and thus extending the evil of short leases. This is not done overtly, indeed, for John Smith, or some other indifferent person, is deputed to attend the sale lest the biddings should be swelled as against a public body, and to add the item to the colossal estate of the Vintners', or Merchant Tailors', or some other guild.

Such, too, is the practice of great proprietors, who are adding to already inflated rentals every thing attainable within the limits of our Babylon.

This was not always so, but within the

" To be continued.

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